

THE  
AMERICAN  
COLLEGE  
DICTIONARY

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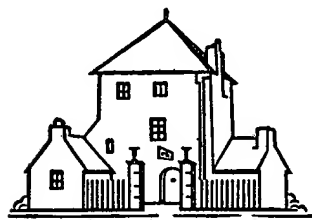
# THE AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY

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or smallpox. 2. affected with smallpox. 3. having pits like those left by smallpox. Also, *variolar*.

**var-i-om-e-ter** (vâr/yôm/ə tar), *n.* *Elect.* 1. an instrument for comparing the intensity of magnetic forces, esp. the magnetic force of the earth, at different points. 2. an instrument for varying inductance, consisting of a fixed coil and a movable coil connected in series (used as a tuning device). [*f. vario-* (comb. form repr. *L. varius* various) + *-meter*]

**var-i-o-rum** (vâr/yôr/əm), *adj.* 1. (of an edition, etc.) characterized by various versions of the text or commentaries by various editors: a *variorum* edition of Shakespeare. — *n.* 2. a variorum edition, text, etc. [short for *L. editio cum notis variorum* edition with notes of various persons]

**var-i-ous** (vâr/yôs), *adj.* 1. differing one from another, or of different kinds, as two or more things. 2. divers, several, or many: in various parts of the world. 3. exhibiting or marked by variety or diversity. 4. differing in different parts, or presenting differing aspects. [*t. L. m. varius*] — *var-i-ous-ly*, *adv.* — *var-i-ous-ness*, *n.* — *Syn.* 1. *VARIOUS*, *DIFFERENT*, *DISTINCT*. *DIVERS* refer to things which are sufficiently unlike to be perceptibly of more than one kind. *VARIOUS* implies that there are several kinds of the same general thing: various types of seaweed. *DIFFERENT* is applied either to a single thing differing in identity or character from another, or to two or more things differing thus from one another: two different stories concerning an event. *DISTINCT* implies want of connection between things, which, however, may possibly be alike or similar: two distinct accounts which coincide. *DIVERS* commonly implies a number or assortment of things or parts differing one from another: three completely diverse proposals for preventing inflation. — *Ant.* 1. identical, same, similar, uniform.

**var-ix** (vâr/yiks), *n., pl. varices* (vâr/ə'sēz/). 1. *Pathol.* a permanent abnormal dilation and lengthening of a vein, usually accompanied by some tortuosity; a varicose vein. 2. *Zool.* a mark or scar on the surface of a shell at a former position of the lip of the aperture. [*ME, t. L. dilated vein*]

**var-let** (vâr/yît), *n.* *Archaic.* 1. an attendant. 2. a page attached to a knight. 3. a low fellow or a rascal. [*ME, t. OF, var. of va(s)let VALET. See VASSAL*]

**var-let-ry** (vâr/yîtrî), *n.* *Archaic.* 1. varlets collectively. 2. the mob or rabble.

**var-mint** (vâr/ment), *n.* *Dial.* vermin. Also, *var/-ment*.

**Varna** (vâr/nâ), *n.* a seaport in NE Bulgaria, on the Black Sea. 77,792 (1946). Also, *Stalin*.

**var-nish** (vâr/nîsh), *n.* 1. a preparation which consists of resinous matter (as copal, lac, etc.) dissolved in an oil (oil varnish) or in alcohol (spirit varnish) or other volatile liquid, and which, when applied to the surface of wood, metal, etc., dries and leaves a hard, more or less glossy, usually transparent coating. 2. the sap of certain trees, used for the same purpose (natural varnish). 3. any of various other preparations similarly used, as one having India rubber, pyroxylin, or asphalt for the chief constituent. 4. a coating or surface of varnish. 5. something resembling a coating of varnish; a gloss. 6. a merely external show, or a veneer. — *v.* 7. to lay varnish on. 8. to invest with a glossy appearance. 9. to give an improved appearance to; embellish; adorn. 10. to cover with a specious or deceptive appearance. [*ME vernisse(n), t. OF: m. vernis-er, der. vernis varnish, n. t. ML: m. vernitium sandarac, sweet-smelling resin, t. MGk: m. bernikê, Gk. Berenikê, a city in Cyrenalca*] — *var'nish-er*, *n.*

**varnish tree**, any of various trees yielding sap or other substances used for varnish, as *Rhus verniciflua* of Japan. See *lacquer*.

**Var-ro** (vâr/rô), *n.* Marcus Terentius (mâr/kas tər-ēn/shēz), c.116-277 B.C., Roman scholar and author.

**var-si-ty** (vâr/sēti), *n., pl. -ties*. 1. colloquial reduction of *university*, used esp. with reference to sports. 2. the first-string team, in any activity, which will represent a school, college, university, or the like.

**Var-u-na** (vâr/vôna, vûr/-), *n.* (in the Hindu Rig-Veda) the god of the sky or heaven, all-encompassing and all-seeing. [*t. Skt.: deity*]

**var-us** (vâr/əs), *n.* *Pathol.* abnormal angulation of bone or joint, with the angle pointing away from midline. [*t. L. bandy-legged*]

**var-y** (vâr/y), *v.* varied, varying. — *v.t.* 1. to change or alter, as in form, appearance, character, substance, degree, etc. 2. to cause to be different, one from another. 3. to diversify (something); relieve from uniformity or monotony. 4. *Music.* to alter (a melody or theme) by modification or embellishments, without changing its identity. — *v.i.* 5. to be different, or show diversity, in different parts, specimens, etc., as a thing. 6. to undergo change in form, appearance, character, substance, degree, etc. 7. *Math.* to be subject to change. 8. to change in succession, follow alternately, or alternate. 9. *Biol.* to exhibit variation. [*ME, t. L: m.s. variare, der. varius various*] — *var-i-er*, *n.* — *var-y-ing-ly*, *adv.*

**vas** (väs), *n., pl. vasa* (väs/ə). *Anat., Zool., Bot.* a vessel or duct. [*t. L. vessel*]

**Va-sa-ri** (väs/sârî), *n.* Giorgio (jôr/jô), 1511-74, Italian painter, architect, and art historian.

**vas-cu-lar** (väs/kyələr), *adj.* *Zool., Bot.* pertaining to, composed of, or provided with vessels or ducts which convey fluids, as blood, lymph, or sap. Also, *vas-cu-*

*lose* (väs/kyelôs/), *vas-cu-lous* (väs/kyələs), [*t. NL: s. vascularis, der. L. vasculum little vessel*] — *vas-cu-lar-i-ty*, *n.* — *vas-cu-lar-ly*, *adv.*

**vascular bundle**, bundle (def. 4).

**vascular tissue**, *Bot.* plant tissue consisting of ducts or vessels which, in highly developed plants, form the system by which sap is conveyed through the plant.

**vas-cu-lum** (väs/kyələm), *n., pl. -la* (-lə), -lums. a kind of case or box used by botanists for carrying specimens as they are collected. [*t. L. dim. of vās vessel*]

**vas de-fe-re-ns** (väs/dēf/ərēnz/), *pl. vasa deferentia* (väs/dēf/ərēn/shē), the deferent duct of the testicle which transports the sperm from the epididymus to the penis. [*L: vessel carrying down*]

**vase** (väs, vāz or, esp. Brit., vāz), *n.* a hollow vessel, generally higher than wide, now chiefly used as a flower container or for decoration. [*t. F, t. L: m. vās vessel*] — *vase/like*, *adj.*

**vas-ec-to-my** (väs/ēk/təmi/), *n., pl. -mies*. *Surg.* excision of the vas deferens, or of a portion of it.

**Vas-e-line** (väs/əlēn/, -līn), *n.* *Trademark.* a translucent, yellow or whitish, semisolid petroleum product (a form of petrolatum), used as a remedial ointment and internal remedy, and in various medicinal and other preparations. [*f. vas (t. G: m. wasser water) + -el-* (t. Gk: m. elaton oil) + *-ine*]

**vaso-**, a word element meaning "vessel," as in *vaso-constrictor*. [comb. form repr. *L. vās vessel*]

**vas-o-con-stric-tor** (väs/ōkanstrīk/tər), *adj.* *Physiol.* serving to constrict blood vessels, as certain nerves or chemical substances.

**vas-o-di-la-tor** (väs/ōdīlā/tər, -dī-), *adj.* *Physiol.* serving to dilate or relax blood vessels, as certain nerves or chemical substances.

**vas-o-mo-tor** (väs/ōmō/tər), *adj.* *Physiol.* serving to regulate the caliber of blood vessels, as certain nerves.

**vas-sal** (väs/əl), *n.* 1. (in the feudal system) a person holding lands by the obligation to render military service or its equivalent to his superior. 2. a feudatory tenant. 3. a person holding some similar relation to a superior; a subject, follower, or retainer. 4. *Archaic.* a servant or slave. — *adj.* 5. pertaining to or characteristic of a vassal. 6. being a vassal or in vassalage. [*ME, t. OF, g. LL vassallus, der. vassus servant; of Celtic orig.*] — *vas/sal-less*, *adj.*

**vas-sal-age** (väs/əl'ij), *n.* 1. state of being a vassal; the status of a vassal. 2. homage or service due from a vassal. 3. a territory held by a vassal. 4. *Hist.* a body of vassals. 5. dependence, subjection, or servitude.

**vast** (väst, väst), *adj.* 1. of very great extent or area; very extensive, or immense. 2. of very great size or proportions; huge; enormous. 3. very great in number, quantity, or amount, or as number, quantity, etc.: a vast army, a vast sum. 4. very great in degree, intensity, etc.: in vast haste, vast importance. — *n.* 5. *Chiefly Poetic.* a vast expanse or space. [*t. L: s. vastus*] — *vast/-ly*, *adv.* — *vast/-ness*, *n.*

**vast-i-tude** (väs/tətid/, -tōd/, väs/-), *n.* 1. vastness or immensity. 2. a vast expanse or space.

**vast-y** (väs/tī, väs/tī), *adj.* *Poetic.* vast; immense.

**vat** (vät), *n., v.* vatted, vattling. — *n.* 1. a large container for liquids. — *v.t.* 2. to put into or treat in a vat. [*ME; OE fæ, c. G fass keg*]

**Vat.**, Vatican.

**vatic** (vät/ik), *adj.* prophetic. Also, *vati/-cal*. [appar. back formation from *VATICINAL*]

**Vat-i-can** (vät/əkan), *n.* 1. Also, *Vatican Palace*, the palace of the popes in Rome; a mass of buildings containing a library, museums of art, etc., immediately to the north of St. Peter's Church (the chief residence of the popes since 1377). 2. the papal power or government, as distinguished from the Quirinal (representing the Italian government). [*t. L: s. Vāticānus (mons) Vatican (hill)*]

**Vatican City**, an independent state within the city of Rome, on the right bank of the Tiber: established in 1929, it is ruled by the Pope and includes St. Peter's Church and the Vatican. ab. 1000 (est. 1954); 109 acres.

**va-tic-i-nal** (vät/ī'ənal), *adj.* prophetic. [*f. s. L Vāticinus prophetic + -al*]

**va-tic-i-nate** (vät/ī'ənāt/), *v.t., v.i., -nated, -nating*. to prophesy. [*t. L: m.s. vāticinātus, pp.*] — *va-tic-i-na-tor*, *n.*

**vat-i-ci-na-tion** (vät/əsənā/shən), *n.* 1. prophesying. 2. a prophecy.

**Vät-ter** (vêt/tər), *n.* a lake in S Sweden. ab. 80 mi. long; 733 sq. mi. Also, *Vät/tern* (vêt/tər) or *Vetter*.

**Vau-ban** (vôbän/), *n.* Sébastien le Prestre de (sê-bäs tyän/ la prê/tər də), 1633-1707, French military engineer and marshal.

**Vaud** (vô), *n.* a canton in W Switzerland. 382,700 pop. (est. 1952); 1239 sq. mi. *Cap.*: Lausanne. German, Waadt.

**vaude-ville** (vôd/vīl, vô/dəvīl), *n.* 1. *Chiefly U.S.* theatrical entertainment consisting of a number of individual performances, acts, or mixed numbers, as of singing, dancing, gymnastic exhibitions, etc. (often used attributively, as in *vaudeville performance, sketch*). 2. a theatrical piece of light or amusing character, interspersed with songs and dances. [*t. F, alter. of chanson du Vau de Vire song of the Valley of Vire (in Normandy)*]

ket, able, dare, art; öb, equal; Y, ice; hôt, över, örder, oll, böök, ööze, out; üp, üse, ürge; e = a in alone; ch, chief; g, give; ng, ring; sh, shoe; th, thin; zh, that; zh, vision. See the full key on inside cover.